

### Comments on Maryland Meeting

Overall, I feel that the idea behind this meeting and its execution were a definite success. The type of discussions which took place are not possible under normal working circumstances. In particular, the fact that the sponsor's representatives both in human factors and management had a chance to meet with industrial and university participants provided automatically for a system of checks and balances so that no one point of view would be overemphasized. It is my belief that when research oriented individuals discuss the sponsor's problems, they tend to direct discussion towards theoretical interests which although laudable, can and do stray from the sponsor's objectives. It was heartening to see the interchange of those representing various viewpoints not only at the formal sessions, but also during the inevitable valuable informal discussions which took place at meals and at other times. From an effectiveness point of view, such a meeting has much to recommend, and I would hope that serious consideration be given to similar meetings in the future.

On the negative side, I think it would be advisable to brief all personnel before the meeting begins regarding the routine aspects of the problem to be discussed. I am aware that this was not possible in the present case for good reason. The maximum effectiveness of such a group is realized when all participants are free to express themselves at any time, which is not possible during a formal briefing.

At a meeting such as this, it is also possible to consider the likely contribution of various alternative courses of action. For example, we did make a statement regarding a recommendation which should be made to the sponsor if no further research on the accommodation-convergence problem were possible. We also discussed how one might continue with a heavily funded project lasting several years. I feel that the presentation of alternative strategies and courses of action to management is the most valuable role that an advisory group can play. In this respect, I would like very much to see, periodically, an overall discussion of the various human factors problems faced by the sponsor and some indication as to the cost and possible pay-off of various approaches. All of the problems we discuss are obviously important. It is also axiomatic that the resources at our disposal are limited and I am concerned that at times we may overemphasize one problem to the exclusion of others.

Specifically, we could have made a "best guess" regarding the accommodation and convergence problem more than three years ago by suggesting that the convergence angle be set to correspond to one diopter of accommodation. At this point, after work which has been concerned with ultrasonics, infrared and laser optometers, we still do not really have much more information to give the sponsor. On the other hand, there are problems which will be with us in the near future for which activity is urgently needed at this point. This is, of course, a personal opinion but is the kind of problem which can be fruitfully discussed in a meeting such as the one under discussion.

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February 16, 1970